

HISTORICAL TIDINGS

A newsletter of the WNCC Historical Society

Rev. Peter McGuire, editor and secretary (pmcguireumc@aol.com)

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*J. B. Pope
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From the President

Hearty greetings to all church historians and history hounds of the Western North Carolina Conference! I am honored to be leading the Conference Historical Society once again and look forward to the possibilities that lie before us. Although the Historical Society has not been particularly active of late, we hope to change this in the coming year. First, this first edition of our newsletter is being sent not only to the Historical Society's current membership, but also to all local church historians and lay leaders in our annual conference. We do so with the hope that you will consider joining the Historical Society and join us in our efforts to preserve the history of Methodism in Western North Carolina, as seen through the eyes of the local church.

We are planning a meeting of the Historical Society for Saturday, February 15, 2003, at Landers Chapel UMC near Dallas. (Details and directions can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.) We think this will be an interesting and informative meeting as we explore the relationship this community of faith has had with the wider social community around it. Come to learn, to exchange ideas with other history-minded folk, and to contribute to the preservation of history in the Western North Carolina Conference.

Our purpose as a society is two-fold: 1) to act as an auxiliary to the Conference Commissions on Archives and History, and 2) to aid local church historians in their tasks. Over the years, the Historical Society has sought to fulfill this purpose in many ways, including:

- giving money to special projects and other needs of the WNC Conference Archive;
- giving money to special projects at the SEJ Heritage Center at Lake Junaluska;
- sponsoring workshops on archival preservation through District Leadership Conferences and seasonal Historical Society meetings;
- visiting some terrific local church archives and history rooms created through the loving and dedicated efforts of local church historians; and
- exploring and celebrating the stories of God's work in and through local churches throughout the conference.

As historians, it is our responsibility and joy to remind God's people of His work in and through them through the centuries. By keeping the story alive in the community's memory, we remind ourselves who we are and help direct our future.

in Christ's service,

Janet Pyatt

“Archives Corner”

“LOCAL CHURCH RECORDS” – In the United Methodist Church, the local church bears responsibility for keeping membership lists, lists of pastors, baptisms, marriages, burials, building construction information, deeds, board meeting minutes, church conference minutes, yearly financial statements, etc. The church should never throw these records away. They should be kept in a secure, dry place, and in addition to the pastor, several persons within the church should be aware of their location. If you need help in determining what records to keep, the Conference Archives can provide you with retention schedules. It is also possible to download The Guidelines for Managing Records of the Local Church and the Annual Conference at the General Commission on Archives and History’s website, www.gcah.org.

The Conference Archives does not keep your local church records. The Discipline requires the Conference Archives to keep Annual Conference records and official records of closed churches. The Western North Carolina Conference Archives has a complete set of Western North Carolina Conference Journals and many of the applicable journals from previous denominations, jurisdictions, and conferences. We have an incomplete collection of 19th century circuit records and secondary histories of Methodism and the conferences from which the Western North Carolina Conference was formed. We have files on every church and most preachers who were members of the various conferences. Our church files consist of newspaper clippings, correspondence, histories provided to us by the churches themselves, some cemetery lists, and some deed information. Our files on preachers often include pictures and obituaries. We are open on Tuesday and Wednesday. Call us.

Announcements -

1) A Heritage Preservation Workshop will be held at Lake Junaluska Friday-Sunday, November 14-16, 2003. Among the items currently on the agenda are: 1. a presentation on John Wesley by the Rev. David Thomas (a clergy member of the Kentucky conference) 2. “Writing Your Local Church History,” led by the Rev. Dr. Harold Lawrence 3. “hands-on” experiences in archival preservation and in doing research 4. doing research on the internet led by the Rev. Jim Pyatt (Chair of the SEJ Commission on Archives and History) 5. worship led by the Rev. David Ortigoza

Registration is \$45. You will need to make your own reservations for housing and meals at Lambuth Inn. For further information, contact the Heritage Center at 828-452-2881, ext. 781.

2) The Southeastern Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History announces the hiring of Mrs. Kimberly Boyd as the new Director of Archives and History for the Southeastern Jurisdiction, effective August 19, 2002. Kim comes to us from First United Methodist Church in Lafayette, LA. She is married to David Boyd, who serves currently as Minister of Music and Christian Education at Fletcher UMC,

Fletcher. We are thankful for the enthusiasm she brings to the position, and encourage each of you to support her as she serves in this capacity.

3) Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, invites all who are interested in the strengths of the Wesley movement and who wish to consider the resources Wesley gave us for the work of the Church into the 21st century to a conference on Candler's campus January 6-8, 2003. The conference, "Celebrating and Revisioning the Wesleyan Movements," will honor the tercentenary of John Wesley's birth. Speakers confirmed so far include Richard Heitzenrater, Rebekah Miles, Randy Maddox, Mary Elizabeth Moore, Stephen Gunter, Mercy A. Oduyoye, and William McClain. Registration information is available on the Candler web site, candler.emory.edu.

4) Set aside the dates of July 14-17, 2003 on your calendar now! The SEJ Historical Society will have its annual meeting at this time at Trinity UMC, Homewood, AL (near Birmingham). The theme for this year's meeting is: "Alabama Methodism: A Record of Change and Progress." Eight major papers are scheduled as part of this meeting, each by a professor of history from a university in Alabama. We will also take a bus tour of several significant United Methodist historic sites in the Birmingham area. For additional information, please contact Dr. C. Phillip Huckaby, 898 Arkadelphia Rd., Birmingham, AL 35204.

Book Reviews

The Fruit of the Vine, a History of Methodism in the Piedmont by Peter R. McGuire is the first volume in over 60 years to deal with the history of the Methodist Protestant Church in North Carolina. It offers a history of Methodist Protestantism, as seen through the life cycle of the Davidson Circuit (currently the South Davidson Charge in Denton, North Carolina). This Circuit (begun in 1844) covered four counties (Davidson, Randolph, Chatham, and Montgomery) and involved 70 churches.

The following (still-active) churches once belonged to the Davidson Circuit: Alleghany, Brower's Chapel, Canaan, Caraway Schoolhouse (belonging to Mt. Vernon UMC), Central in Denton, Chandler's Grove, Chapel Hill, Charlotte, Flag Springs in Seagrove, Giles Chapel, Jerusalem UCC, Liberty Fellowship in New Hope, Lineberry, Lovejoy in Montgomery Co., Macedonia in Montgomery Co., Mount Ebal, Mountain View Independent Methodist, Mt. Pleasant on Hoover Hill Rd., Mt. Zion in Chatham Co., Mt. Zion in Randolph Co., New Union on Union Church Rd., Pine Hill, Piney Grove in Chatham Co., Piney Grove in Randolph Co., Pleasant Grove south of Denton, Pleasant Hill near Seagrove, Pleasant Union UCC, Spoon's Chapel UCC, and Tabernacle.

The Fruit of the Vine features discussions of the rise and fall of Methodist Protestantism; Methodist Protestant struggles with slavery, camp meetings, and social reforms; 5 detailed maps; a 16 page index; histories of each of church

involved; as possible, lists of the ministers who served each church; and biographies of each minister who served the Davidson Circuit.

The North Carolina Society of Historians recently honored *The Fruit of the Vine* with the, "Twiford Religious History Book Award" for the preservation of North Carolina history. To celebrate this award, Parkway Publishing is offering a special to the readers of this newsletter. If you complete the form included below and mail it to the publisher along with a check for \$25 (this includes sales tax and shipping), an autographed copy will be mailed to you.

Ongoing Research

It is our hope that you will let us know what research you are doing in preserving your local Methodist histories. Email Peter at pmcguireumc@aol.com, and your research will be noted in future issues. Possibly, others will be able to assist you. Below are the numbers of persons or agencies who might be helpful to you in doing your research.

Conference archives – (800) 562-7929 (Nancy Andersen, Nancy Spaine).
Hours (Tues, Wed: 9-4)

For history in the Southern Piedmont, contact the Randolph Room at the Randolph County Library in Asheboro. The main librarian is Marsha Haithcock. Their number is (336) 318-6815. They have extensive records and a thorough collection of genealogical resources.

Minutes and News from the Society

On October 12, 2002, the executive committee of the WNCC Historical Society met at the home of Nancy Andersen, Conference Archivist for our regular Fall meeting. At this meeting, officers were accepted. The officers are as follows: President – Janet Pyatt, Vice President – Duane Flynn, Secretary and Newsletter editor – Peter McGuire, Treasurer – Linda Stack Morgan.

In addition, a budget was suggested for approval at the next meeting, and a decision was made to generate a semi-annual newsletter.

Our next meeting will be February 15, 2003 at 1pm at Landers Chapel, 1205 Long Shoals Rd, Lincolnton, NC 28092. The meeting will include a tour of the church, a two room schoolhouse built in 1912, and the cemetery. Histories of Landers Chapel will be available for \$10.

Lander's Chapel is located off of Hwy 321. From 85 take 321 north in Gastonia, and turn on 275/279. Go West on 279 towards Cherryville 5.8 miles to Long Shoals Rd. Turn right. Lander's Chapel will be on the left after 2.8 miles.

From 40, go south on 321 from Hickory to 275/279. After this, follow directions in previous paragraph.